

REMARKS

Claims 1-37 are pending and stand rejected. Claim 18 has been amended to remove an extraneous comment.

The examiner rejected claims 1-4, 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 17, 19-21, 25, 26, 28, 30-32, and 36 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Donner, U.S. Patent 5,722,069, hereinafter Donner. Here, the Examiner stated that Donner teaches a system comprising a plurality of vehicle audio accessories; inherently an input section for receiving the audio signal; a switching section coupled to the input section; a controller for receiving the audio signals from vehicle audio accessories and for providing control signals to the switching section; and an output section containing speakers.

Independent claims 1, 20, and 31 have been amended to more distinctly claim the subject matter that the applicant believes to be the invention. In particular, the claims more fully indicate that audio signals received and transmitted by the input section are received by two disparate devices, i.e., the switching section and the controller (Figure 1). Additionally, the switching section receives input directly from the input section and responds to control signals arriving along a different path from the controller 126 (Figure 1 and p. 20, lines 16-19). In contrast, the device disclosed by Donner

includes a controller 4 that comprises an inherent input section (not shown) wherein audio signals must pass through the controller 4 to reach the switch 3 (Figure 1).

In the instant application, audio signals are received by the controller from the input section (Figure 1). In response to an instruction set, the controller produces control signals for directing the operation of the switching section (p. 20, lines 16-19). Only the control signals are passed from the controller to the switching section. As previously indicated, the audio signals are received by the switching section directly from the input section. In response to the control signals arriving from the controller, the switching section selects only one audio signal from those arriving from the input section and passes it to the output section.

Because the device taught by Donner does not include a separate communication path from the input section to the switching section in addition to the communication path from the input section to the controller, the invention claimed in the instant application is patentably distinct from that disclosed by Donner. As such, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider his rejection of independent claims 1, 20, 31 and their corresponding dependent claims.

The examiner also rejected claims 5, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 18, 22, 23, 24, 29, 33, 34, 35 and 37 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

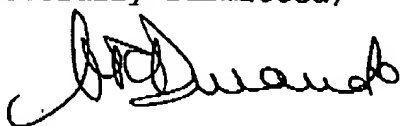
unpatentable over Donner in view of Wang U.S. Patent 6,272,362, hereinafter Wang; in view of Lustig U.S. Patent 3,586,977, hereinafter Lustig; in view of DeLine et al, U.S. Patent 6,420,975, hereinafter DeLine; in view of Eggers U.S. Patent 5,910,996, hereinafter Eggers, and further in view of Hadley U.S. Patent 5,243,640, hereinafter Hadley; in view of Kishi et al, U.S. Patent 5,635,925, herein after Kishi, and further in view of Eggers; and in view of Mai et al, U.S. Patent 4,484,344, hereinafter Mai (collectively referred to as "others"). Because these claims depend from independent claims 1, 20, and 31, the Examiner relied on the teachings of others to show that it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to extend the teaching of Donner to include the limitations inherent in these dependent claims.

However, for the reasons indicated above, the applicant believes newly amended claims 1, 20, and 31 to be distinctly patentable from the device taught by Donner. Because the teaching of others merely add limitations to the invention of Donner and the currently amended independent claims of the instant application do not read on Donner, the applicant respectfully submits that it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of others with those of Donner to produce the subject matter of the dependent claims of the instant application. As such, the applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider his rejection of the indicated dependent claims.

For the reasons stated above, the applicant believes that Claims 1-37 recite allowable subject matter. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection.

The applicant and his attorney thank the Examiner for the thorough examination of the application. Please charge any fees related to this filing to our Deposit Account No. 17-0055.

Respectfully submitted,



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